[illegible]

(784) The chief, as representative of his people, bathes in special sanctified water, a decoction made from the bark of various and whose, and the root of various [illegible]
(785) This completes the ordinary annual ceremony, at which now fire is not made.

(785) On certain special occasions a more elaborate ritual is carried out; such occasions are the death of a chief, a threatened epidemic of infectious disease, a murder (especially by shooting) and the frequent occurrence of quarrels in the village.

In such circumstances, in addition to the ordinary purificatory ceremony described above, the partridge sticks of the whole village are removed and all fires extinguished. The discarded sticks and all ashes of the old fires are carried to the meeting of paths, where the former are stuck upright in the ground and the ashes piled together; this is done in preparation, all the people taking part. On their return to the village (787) new fire is made by friction by either the chief or his younger brother—usually the latter; fire procured in any other way would nullify the proceedings. Finally (788) all the people bathe in the sanctioned water used only by the chief at the ordinary ceremony.

157 776 In addition to this special form of the purificatory ceremony, another rite is sometimes performed after the occurrence of a murder or as prophylactic against the spread of epidemic disease. The doctor first makes a kind of trough (tukunyan) from the bark of sandalwood or myrtle, and procures a shekkida (or shyrupak) basket—used as a strainer in ash-making. Having collected his medicines he proceeds to the bank of the stream near the usual bathing-place of the village and digs a shallow hole, in which he places the basket; in this he puts the leaves of a certain thorny shrub and covers the whole with the trough, which is banked up with earth so as to be perfectly firm. He then puts his "medicines" into the trough; these are, first, the head of an iron hammer and a piece of slag, both from a smelting furnace. On top of these he puts pieces of the root of a certain tree which has many and particularly sharp thorns, and bits of bark from two trees peculiar for having very straight stems. Having distributed these evenly along the floor of the trough, he fills it with water and then proceeds to construct an arch over the end of the trough farthest from the stream. Two long poles, cut from a kind of tree particularly rich in sap, are planted in the ground, one at each side of the trough and close to it; these are bent over towards each other, and fastened together by means of a strip of their own bark. A bamboo is now planted alongside each, and similarly tied to its fellow. During all these preparations and throughout the ceremony it is essential that the doctor has no knots in any part of his clothing.

The preparations are now complete, and when all the fires in the village have been extinguished the people go in procession to the spot where the doctor awaits them. All must be partly clad and must have no metal about them.

(790) The chief opens the ceremony. He steps into the trough and taking some of the sanctioned water therefrom in his hands he rinses his mouth with it. He then (791) offers a prayer to the spirits of his ancestors, first stating the occasion and detailing the measures which are to be taken to deal with it (new fires, smearing, descent of partridge-sticks and sharing). The prayer over, he splashes the water in the trough over his body and passes through the arch, first throwing some gifts (beads or, in more modern times, money) into the trough. These gifts, presumably (792) intended as an offering to the spirits, are the perquisite of the doctor, and everybody is supposed to contribute in turn.